News Release
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Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Sante et des Soins de longue durée

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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT HOLDING PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE

Government Wants To Hear From Ontarians On 10-Year Strategic Plan

THORNHILL – The McGuinty government wants to hear from local residents as it develops a 10-year strategic plan for the province's health care system, Mario Racco, MPP for Thornhill, announced today on behalf of Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman.

"Listening to Ontarians is essential to the development of a long-term plan for the province's health system because it is their system," said Racco. "Our government has made significant progress in increasing access to health care and bringing down wait times. We want to make sure our health system will be there for Ontarians in the future because we're in this together."

A public regional consultation will be held on Wednesday, February 28 at 3:00 p.m. at:

Garnet A. Williams Community Centre
Gymnasium
501 Clark Avenue West
Thornhill ON L4J 4E5

The meeting in Thornhill will be hosted by Racco and speakers will include Ken Morrison, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).

The consultation will allow local residents an opportunity to have their say about the future of health care in Ontario, as well as front-line health care providers and organized health care groups. Members of the public who wish to attend or participate in the consultations can obtain more information by calling 1-866-968-9582 or by visiting www.register-ourplanforhealth.ca.

The 2.5-hour session will highlight the government's progress in building a stronger health care system in Ontario, health and social trends in the province, future system challenges and opportunities, and an overview of what the government and Local Health Integration Networks have already heard from the public.

Participants at the session will then be engaged in a dialogue about the important values and priorities that will shape Ontario's future health care system.

The regional consultation is just one of many ways that the government has been obtaining feedback from Ontarians on their health care priorities and concerns. Opinions have been collected through other meetings with health care stakeholders, telephone surveys, e-mails to a dedicated website (www.ourplanforhealth.ca) and through a toll-free phone line: 1-866-532-3161.

The consultation will be part of the development of a strategic plan, which is a commitment legislated

under the Local Health System Integration Act. The plan will set out a vision, priorities and strategic directions for our health care system over the next 10 years.

"Developing a plan is a huge challenge and responsibility," said Smitherman. "And we can't do it without listening to the thoughts, concerns and ideas from the people of Ontario."

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities - keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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